(f) if so, the details thereof; and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An Expert Consultation on Research Priority Setting by the National Agricultural Research Systems in the Asia Pacific Region and the Fourth General Assembly of the Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) was organised during November 25-26, 1996 at IARI, New Delhi.

The Consultation was attended by Chairman, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and Vice-President, World Bank, Directors General of ICRISAT, CIMMYT, IRRI, ISNAR, senior representatives of FAO, IPGRI, ICARDA, IIMI, ICLARM, ILRI, IVRDC, representatives of National Agricultural Research System (NARS) of countries in the region.

APAARI is committed to promote exchange or scientific and technical know-how in agriculture, encourage establishment of appropriate cooperative research & training, assess strengthening of research organisation and management capabilities and strengthen cross linkages between National, Regional and International Research Centre.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) (i) In the conference the scope of regionalisation was emphasized.

(ii) Through the instrument of mutual collaboration, the member countries can think of lasting solutions to ensure food security, substainable national resources management, equity and social justice, diversification in agriculture and global competitiveness in tune with the changes in the agrarian structure such as the decrease in farm population, small scale fanning system, increasing population.

(iii) The World's core objectives of poverty reduction, food security and substainable natural resource management cannot be met unless rural well-being in general and a prosperous private agriculture for small and medium size holders in particular are nurtured and improved. The technology, policy and institutions have to be pro-poor, pro-women and pro-environment.

(iv) Achieving excellence in human resource base will require upgrading of the existing infrastructure at institute/ university either through countries' own efforts or through international cooperation.

(v) Greater thrust on research on pulses, conservation of bio-diversity, post-harvest technology and water management aspects.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) These suggestions will be studied carefully and appropriate action be taken thereon in the IX Plan.

Assistance for increased Foodgrains production in Gujarat

2356. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have taken to provide more yield increasing inputs at subsidised prices and provide market and price support to the farmers of Gujarat so that they are encouraged to produce more foodgrains in the State;

(b) the year-wise details thereof for the last five years;

(c) whether any improvement in the production of foodgrains in the State has been noticed during the said period; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) to (d) The Government of India has undertaken a number of Centrally Sponsored Schemes to assist the States, including Gujarat, in providing subsidised inputs like Seeds, Fertilisers, Agricultural Implements to farmers. These include the Integrated Cereal Development Programme for Rice, Wheat and coarse Cereal based on Cropping System Programme, National Pulses Development Project and Oilseed Production Programme.

In order to ensure remunerative prices to growers for their produce, including farmers of Gujarat, Government of India is pursuing a positive price policy. Under this, the Government announces each season Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for major agricultural commodities and organises Price Support Operations through Public and Cooperative Agencies. The MSP for major crops during the last five years is given in the enclosed annexure *(see Appendix 179, Annexure No. 54).*

Under the Plan Scheme of "Promotion of Agricultural Mechanisation among Small Farmers' a 30% subsidy subject to a maximum of Rs. 30,000 is paid for purchase of tractors and matching implements. Funds to the tune of Rs. 30.90 lakh, Rs. 60.80 lakh, Rs. 41.40 lakh and Rs. 76.20 lakh have been released to Gujarat during the years 1992-93, 1993-94, 1995-96 and 1996-97 for subsidising 103,206, 138 and 254 tractor-sets respectively.

Subsidised fertilisers including Urea are being allocated to various States at the beginning of every season. Urea to the extent of 7.13 lakh tonnes, 8.03 lakh tonnes, 8.07 lakh tonnes, 9.05 lakh tonnes and 11.50 lakh tonnes was supplied to Gujarat during 1991-92,1992-93,1993-94,1994-95 and 1995-96 respectively.

The Production of foodgrains in Gujarat during 1991-92 to 1995-96 is given below:

Year	Production (Million Tonnes)
1991-92	3.39
1992-93	5.41
1993-94	3.78
1994-95	5.25
1995-96	4.10

Bombay Urban Transport Project-II

2357. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether project preparation in respect of Bombay Urban Transport Project-II (BUTP-II) has since been completed, if not, present status thereof;

(b) the total estimated cost and workwise details; and

(c) how much World Bank loan is expected for it?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) (a) to (c) At present four studies for rail components of BUTP-II, viz, (1) Financial and Institutional Study of combined Suburban Rail Operation (2) System Planning Study and Development of Simulation Model (3) Study to determine specification of Remanufacture of EMU rolling stock (4) Study for conversion of existing DC traction to AC traction are underway. The project components and size of the project will be decided only after the preparatory studies are over. It will take about 6 months for the three main studies S. Nos. (1) to (3)'to be completed. The fourth study, i.e., item (4)"may take about one year to complete. The estimated cost of the studies funded by World Bank is as under:

1. US $0.95 million
2. US $ 0.90 million
3. US $ 0.55 million
4. US $ 0.60 million

Transfer and Promotion Policy in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan

2358. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan had in 1982-83, undertaken in a court of law that promotion will precede transfers and recruitments every year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this commitment has been in vogue since then and forms part of transfer guidelines operative part; and

(c) if so, the reasons for not adhering to the norm in case of promotion of Group 'D' employees to the post of LDCs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) to (c) Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan has informed that as per the Board of Governors' decision, promotion is to precede transfer and recruitment in respect of teachers. No guidelines regarding the sequence for posting of non-teaching staff including the post of LDCs have been laid down. Information